

Message Text

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PAGE 01 BAGHDA 00149 290916 Z

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ACTION NEA-12

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E. O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: PFOR, IZ, US

SUBJ: U. S. POLICY TOWARD IRAQ

1. SUMMARY: USINT RECCOMENDATIONS THAT DEPT APPROVE CERTAIN

REQUESTS FOR IRAQ ARE BASEDON ASSESSMENT THAT CONFLICT TAKING
PLACE WITHIN IRAQI REGIME BETWEEN EXTREMIST ELEMENTS CURRENTLY
IN CONTROL OF PARTY AND SECURITY ORGANS AND MORE CONSTRUCTIVE,
REALISTIC ELEMENTS WHO WANT TO
GET ON WITH DEVELOPMENT. WE SHOULD
CONDEMN OR IGNORE THE FIRST, BUT WORK TO STRENGTHEN THE LATTER.
END SUMMARY.

2. RECENT MESSAGES FROM USINT (A) RECOMMENDING FAVORABLE RESPONSE
TO IRAQI REQUEST FOR AIR TRANSPORT FOR MILITARY BASKETBALL TEAM;
(B) PROPOSING THAT USG OFFER A FEW GRADUATE SCHOLARSHIPS; (C)
REQUESTING FILMS FOR MINISTRY OF IRRIGATION; AND (D) PROVIDING U. S.
FIRMS WITH SUGGESTIONS FOR DOING MORE BUSINESS HERE, RAISE
QUESTIONS ABOUT OUR POLICY TOWARD IRAQ. ONE OF MY BRITISH
COLLEAGUES FOR EXAMPLE, WAS APPALLED BY THOUGHT THAT USINT
WOULD EVEN CONSIDER RECOMMENDING THAT USG PROVIDE TRANSPORT FOR
BASKETBALL TEAM. THIS MESSAGE GIVES RATIONALE BEHIND
RECOMMENDATIONS.

3. THERE ARE TWO MAJOR FORCES IN IRAQ TODAY AND GAP SEPARATING
THEM IS BECOMING SO WIDE THAT ONE CAN ALMOST SPEAK OF TWO IRAQS.

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PAGE 02 BAGHDA 00149 290916 Z

THEIR RESPECTIVE POLICIES ARE SOMETIMES DIAMETRICALLY OPPOSED, E. G. DISREGARD OF WESTERN OPINION ON ARRESTED JEN AND EFFORT TO PROMOTE TOURISM. BEST KNOWN IRAQ IS ENGAGED IN SUBVERSION, SMUGGLING ARMS, SUPPORTING BLACK SEPTEMBER (AT LEAST TACITLY) AND OTHER EXTREMIST GROUPS, INCITING ARMED CLASHES ON KUWAITI AND IRANIAN BORDERS, AND IS VOCIFEROUS IN ITS ANTI- AMERICAN PROPAGANDA. THIS IRAQ ACCURATELY REFLECTS POWERFUL, BUT SMALL GROUP OF BAATH PARTY MILITANTS AND OPPORTUNISTS, MOST IN THEIR TWENTIES AND THIRTIES, WHO DOMINATE SECURITY AND PARTY ORGANIZATIONS. THEY COME TO POWER THROUGH CONSPIRACY AND VIOLENCE, LACK EXPERIENCE AND FORMAL EDUCATION, AND, SINCE THEY KNOW LITTLE ABOUT IT, THEIR PERCEPTIONS OF OUTSIDE WORLD USUALLY REFLECT ONLY THEIR IRAQI EXPERIENCE. MOST ARE TRUE BELIEVERS IN MILITANT OPPOSITION TO REACTION (THE MONARCHY) AND IMPERIALISM (ISRAEL, IPC AND THE U. S.) AND THEIR SUPPORT FOR LIBERATION AND SOCIALISM (BAATH IRAQ). THERE IS LITTLE U. S. CAN DO TO EITHER INFLUENCE THEM OR GET RID OF THEM

4. THE OTHER IRAQ, EQUALLY NATIONALISTIC, IS BUSY CARRYING OUT DEVELOPMENT PLANS, RUNNING INOC AND THE BANKS, PROMOTING TOURISM, TRYING TO REVERSE BRAIN DRAIN, AND WORKING HARD FOR A BETTER LIFE FOR THEMSELVES. IT INCLUDES THE TECHNOCRATS AND NO DOUBT REPRESENTS MAJORITY OF POPULATIONS. THEY DO NOT LIKE ARBITRARY RULE AND POLICE STATE METHODS OF BAATH REGIME BUT ARE POLITICALLY POWERLESS. THERE ARE, HOWEVER, INDICATIONS THAT THEIR ABILITY TO INFLUENCE RCC, PARTICULARLY IN ECONOMIC POLICY IS ON INCREASE.

5. IN FACE OF IRAQ' S RECENT ACTIVITIES (ARMS SMUGGLING TO PAKISTAN, ATTACK ON KUWAIT, BOYCOTT AGAINST LEBANON, SUBVERSION IN THE GULF AND YEMEN, AND AT LEAST TACIT SUPPORT FOR BLACK SEPTEMBER), U. S. COULD CONDEMN GOI, REFUSE ANY REQUESTS FROM WHATEVER SOURCE, AND PERHAPS EVEN TAKE SOME HOSTILE ACTIONS AGAINST BAATH REGIME. SUCH A POLICY WOULD BE MORALLY CONFRONTING, BUT IN MY VIEW, HAVE LITTLE CHANCE OF BRINGING ABOUT CHANGE FOR BETTER. ON CONTRARY, IT WOULD PROBABLY STRENGTHEN EXTREMISTS SINCE IT WOULD CONFIRM THEIR VIEW OF U. S. AS CHIEF ENEMY.

6. MORE REALISTIC WAY OF DEALING WITH DICHOTOMOUS IRAQ, AND ONE WHICH CARRIES SOME HOPE FOR EVENTUALLY INFLUENCING REGIME TOWARD MORE CONSTRUCTIVE POLICIES, IS TO SEIZE EVERY OPPORTUNITY THAT MAY
SECRET

SECRET

PAGE 03 BAGHDA 00149 290916 Z

STRENGTHEN CONSTRUCTIVE ELEMENTS. WE CAN DO THIS BY RE-ESTABLISHING

DIRECT OFFICIAL TIES WHERE POSSIBLE, BY ENCOURAGING MORE PRIVATE
LINKS, ESPECIALLY IN COMMERCIAL SECTOR, AND BY RESPONDING
FAVORABLY TO REQUESTS FROM THOSE ELEMENTS WHO WISH TO DEAL WIT US.
AT SAME TIME, THERE IS NO REASON WHY WE SHOULD NOT CONDEMN MORE
IRRESPONSIBLE AND EXTREMISTS ACTS OF REGIME. IN SHORT, PURSUE A
HIGHLY FLEXIBLE POLICY THAT ATTEMPTS TO DEAL WITH BOTH IRAQS.

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